

**Abstract 686**

**TITLE:** How Integrating the Proper HIV Risk Reduction Program Into a Substance Abuse Treatment Center Setting Can Increase Client Attainment of Their Goals and Objectives And Can Reduce the Incidence of Substance Abuse Relapse.

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**ISSUE:** Substance abuse treatment centers deal with clients who are at a higher risk for acquiring HIV than the general population, yet there is confusion and resistance surrounding the amount of HIV prevention that should be in place for these clients. HIV risk reduction and substance abuse treatment have historically been viewed and treated as separate issues. Using an HIV risk assessment tool that numerically measures risk, we can insert goals and objectives into a client's chart that will assist the counselor in helping the client realize their recovery goals.

**SETTING:** Substance Abuse Treatment Centers

**PROJECT:** To address this issue, Shanti of Southeast Alaska has embarked on a comprehensive program that has initiated the blending of HIV risk reduction and substance abuse treatment in treatment centers in the area. We have 1) approached treatment centers, 2) trained their staff and counselors 3) held workshops to speed implementation and 4) maintained a data base of clients' progress. The Program itself: 1) uses an HIV risk assessment inventory that numerically measures the clients, personal relative HIV risk, 2) identifies their highest HIV risk behaviors, 3) inserts the appropriate HIV risk reduction goals and objectives into the clients' treatment plan, 4) uses these objectives to assist the counselor in identifying substance abuse issues that need to be addressed, and 5) uses the HIV inventory as a pre- and post-test to measure progress in attaining HIV risk reduction goals.

**RESULTS:** The program is in effect in two substance abuse treatment centers and the Public Health Department in Ketchikan Alaska. Early reports indicate that the counselors are using the HIV risk assessment and treatment objectives to 'get at' important recovery issues like: boundaries, honesty, openness, communication and empowerment. These treatment centers are regularly sending us their clients' pre- and post treatment anonymous scores on the risk assessment inventory. We are seeing that those who continue substance abuse treatment have lessened their risk of acquiring HIV as witnessed by their attainment of their established treatment goals.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** Substance abuse counselors and administrators generally feel they have hectic schedules that are not amenable to inserting of new goals and objectives for their clients. We have seen that once we discuss the sobriety enhancing aspect of looking at HIV high-risk behavior and give them a tool which measures progress continued for a longer period of time, into continuing care for example, the positive results can be greater.

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